

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ROME 08365 201634Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4769
INFO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

S E C R E T ROME 8365

EXDIS

FROM AMBASSADOR LODGE'S OFFICE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PFOR, HU
SUBJECT: VATICAN ATTITUDE TOWARD CROWN OF ST. STEPHEN

REF: STATE 108418

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS REFTEL ON MAY 20
WE ASKED FOREIGN MINISTER CASAROLI GO GIVE US VATICAN
VIEWS TOWARD THE CROWN OF ST. STEPHEN.
2. CASAROLI WAS WELL VERSED ON THE SERIES OF
CONSULTATIONS ON THE CROWN WHICH THE USG AND THE VATICAN
HAVE HAD SINCE 1945. HE THOUGHT THAT RETURN OF THE
CROWN TO HUNGARY CONTINUES TO BE A KEY OBJECTIVE OF
COMMUNIST REGIME BECAUSE IT STILL RETAINS IMPORTANCE
AS SYMBOL OF "LEGITIMACY" OF HUNGARIAN NATIONAL AUTHORITY.
HE ALSO THOUGHT ITS RETURN WOULD "SHOCK" ANTI-COMMUNIST HUN-
GARIANS BOTH WITHIN AND OT OF HUNGARY.

3. CASAROLI, AFTER NOTING THAT POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS
HAD TRANSPIRED IN RECENT YEARS IN VATICAN/HUNGARIAN
AND IN U.S. /HUNGARIAN RELATIONSHIPS WHICH MAKE
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OPPROTUNE A REEVALUATION OF THE ISSUE OF THE CROWN'S
RETURN TO HUNGARY, WAS QUICK TO POINT OUT THAT POPE
PAUL WAS "SENTIMENTAL" ABOUT THE CROWN AND THERFORE
HE WOULD HAVE TO OBTAIN THE POPE'S DIRECT VIEWS ON THE
ISSUE BEFORE HE COULD GIVE US A FORMAL REPLY.

4. COMMENT: CASAROLI WAS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED THAT THE

SUG HAS APPROACHED VATICAN FOR ITS VIEWS ON THE MATTER AND WILL UNDOUBTEDLY PROVIDE US WITH AN AUTHORITATIVE ANSWER IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WE SUSPECT THAT HE HAD BEEN THINKING ACTIVELY ABOUT THIS MATTER IN CONNECTION WITH FORTHCOMING VISIT OF KADAR (ROME 8211). WHILE AN OBJECTIVE EVALUATION OF DEVELOPMENTS IN VATICAN/ HUNGARIAN RELATIONS IN RECENT YEARS WOULD INCLINE US TO CONCLUDE THAT THE VATICAN WOULD NOT OBJECT TO THE RETURN OF THE CROWN TO HUNGARY, THEPOPE HIMSELF MIGHT OBJECT, PREFERRING TO DELAY ITS RETURN UNTIL A FORMAL RELATIONSHIP COULD BE FORGED BETWEEN THE VATICAN AND HUNGARY.
GARDNER

SECRET

NNN

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